

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Previously presented) A damage tolerant shaft comprising:
an elongate, annular body extending lengthwise and being symmetrical about an axis;
a plurality of ribs extending inwardly from said annular body and connecting within an interior of said annular body; and
a filler material disposed within interstices defined between said annular body and said plurality of ribs and between said plurality of ribs at a point of connection, wherein said annular body and said plurality of ribs cooperate to define elongate interstices extending lengthwise through the shaft such that said filler material also extends lengthwise through the shaft,
wherein said annular body and said plurality of ribs cooperate to define a plurality of voids extending lengthwise therealong.
- 2 (Original) The damage tolerant shaft of claim 1, wherein said annular body and said plurality of ribs are made of a composite material.
3. (Original) The damage tolerant shaft of claim 1, wherein said annular body and said plurality of ribs are made of a metallic material.
4. (Original) The damage tolerant shaft of claim 1, wherein said annular body and said plurality of ribs are made of an organic material.
5. (Original) The damage tolerant shaft of claim 1, wherein said annular body and said plurality of ribs are made of an inorganic material.
6. (Original) The damage tolerant shaft of claim 1, wherein said annular body and said plurality of ribs are made of organic and inorganic materials.

7. (Original) The damage tolerant shaft of claim 2, wherein at least one of said annular body and said plurality of ribs includes a plurality of reinforcing fibers oriented in a direction perpendicular to the axis about which said annular body is symmetrical.

Claims 8 - 24 (Canceled).

25. (Previously presented) The damage tolerant shaft of claim 2 wherein said annular body and said plurality of ribs comprise a plurality of layered plies of composite material, and wherein each ply extends along and defines a portion of at least two ribs and an arcuate section of said annular body.

26. (Previously presented) The damage tolerant shaft of claim 25 wherein said annular body further comprises a second plurality of layered plies of composite material that extend circumferentially thereabout.

27. (Previously presented) The damage tolerant shaft of claim 10 wherein each lobe is comprised of a plurality of layered plies of composite material, wherein each ply extends about a respective lobe and defines a portion of at least two ribs and an arcuate section of said annular body.

28. (Previously presented) The damage tolerant shaft of claim 27 further comprising an outer layer comprising a second plurality of layered plies of composite material that extend circumferentially about said plurality of lobes.

29. (Previously presented) A damage tolerant shaft comprising:
an annular body symmetrical about an axis;
a plurality of ribs extending inwardly from said annular body and connecting within an interior of said annular body; and

a filler material disposed within interstices defined between said annular body and said plurality of ribs and between said plurality of ribs at a point of connection,

wherein said annular body and said plurality of ribs cooperate to define a plurality of voids extending lengthwise therealong; and

wherein said annular body and said plurality of ribs comprise a plurality of layered plies of composite material, and wherein each ply extends along and defines a portion of at least two ribs and an arcuate section of said annular body.

30. (Previously presented) The damage tolerant shaft of claim 29 wherein said annular body further comprises a second plurality of layered plies of composite material that extend circumferentially thereabout.

31. (Previously presented) The damage tolerant shaft of claim 29 wherein the layer plies include a plurality of reinforcing fibers oriented in a direction perpendicular to the axis about which said annular body is symmetrical.